What is claimed is:

- An Equine Herpes Virus wherein the nucleotide sequence encoding a protein gM is at least 70% absent and wherein the expression of the gene coding for the UL9 homolog (gene 53) is not affected.
- 2. An Equine Herpes Virus, wherein the nucleotides 93254 to 94264 as numbered for the virus strain EHV-1 Ab4p or corresponding thereto in other EHV strains are deleted.
- 3. The Equine Herpes Virus according to any one of claims 1 or 2 further comprising one or more heterologous genes.
- 4. The Equine Herpes Virus (EHV) according to claim 1 or 2, wherein said virus is a type 1 or type 4 EHV.
- 5. A nucleic acid comprising a nucleotide sequence encoding the Equine Herpes Virus according to any one of claims 1 or 2.
- 6. A nucleic acid comprising a nucleotide sequence encoding the Equine Herpes Virus according to claim 3.
- 7. A pharmaceutical composition comprising the Equine Herpes Virus according to any one of claims 1 or 2; and a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier.
- 8. A kit comprising in one or more containers: (a) isolated wild type protein gM; (b) the Equine Herpes Virus according to any one of claims 1 or 2; and (c) antibodies that specifically bind the wild type protein gM or the Equine Herpes Virus according to any one of claims 1 or 2.

- 9. A method for determining whether an animal is infected with a wild type Equine Herpes Virus (EHV) or is treated with the EHV according to any one of claims 1 or 2, comprising analyzing a nucleic acid encoding protein gM derived from the animal and comparing the nucleic acid from the animal with a nucleic acid encoding the wild type protein gM and a nucleic acid encoding the protein gM of the EHV according to any one of claims 1 or 2.
- 10. A method for determining whether an animal is infected with a wild type Equine Herpes Virus (EHV) or is treated with an EHV encoded by the nucleic acid of claim 5 comprising contacting an EHV nucleic acid encoding gM derived from the animal with a nucleic acid probe capable of specifically hybridizing to a nucleic acid encoding a wild type gM protein or the nucleic acid of claim 5, and measuring the amount of any hybridization of said probe.
- 11. A kit comprising in one or more containers a nucleic acid probe that is capable of specifically hybridizing to a nucleic acid comprising a sequence of nucleotides encoding a wild type Equine Herpes Virus protein gM or the nucleic acid of claim 5.
- 12. A pharmaceutical composition comprising the Equine Herpes Virus according to claim 3; and a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier.
- 13. A pharmaceutical composition comprising the nucleic acid according to claim 5; and a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier.
- 14. A method for improving the immune response induced by an Equine Herpes Virus (EHV) vaccine against wild type infections comprising administering EHV according to any one of claims 1 or 2.

- 15. A method for improving the immune response induced by an Equine Herpes Virus (EHV) vaccine against wild type infections comprising administering EHV according to claim 3.
- 16. A method for the prophylaxis or treatment of Equine Herpes Virus (EHV) in an animal comprising administering the pharmaceutical composition according to claim 7 to said animal.
- 17. A method for the prophylaxis or treatment of Equine Herpes Virus (EHV) in an animal comprising administering the pharmaceutical composition according to claim 12 to said animal.
- 18. A method for the prophylaxis or treatment of Equine Herpes Virus (EHV) in an animal comprising administering the pharmaceutical composition according to claim 13 to said animal.
- 19. A method for determining whether an animal is infected with a wild type Equine Herpes Virus (EHV) or is treated with the EHV according to any one of claims 1 or 2, comprising comparing an EHV protein gM derived from the animal with a wild type EHV protein gM and a protein gM of the EHV according to any one of claims 1 or 2.
- 20. A method for determining whether an animal is infected with a wild type Equine Herpes Virus (EHV) or is treated with the EHV according to any one of claims 1 or 2, comprising contacting an EHV protein gM derived from the animal with a wild type EHV protein gM or a protein gM of the EHV according to any one of claims 1 or 2, adding an antibody that specifically binds the wild type protein gM or the protein gM of the EHV according to any one of claims 1 or 2, and determining the binding of said antibody.